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**STATE OF VERMONT  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
109 STATE STREET  
MONTPELIER, VT  
05609-1001**

June 11, 2019

The Honorable Philip B. Scott  
109 State Street  
Montpelier, Vermont 05609

Dear Governor Scott:

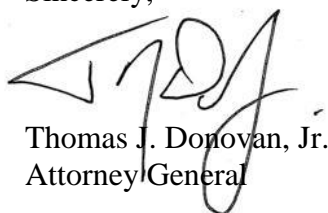
Thank you for your letter dated June 5, 2019, concerning the decisions by the Chittenden County State's Attorney to dismiss, without prejudice, charges related to three defendants accused of murder or attempted murder.

The matters you have identified are complex, and the request to revisit the decisions of the State's Attorney requires due care and considered deliberation. As you know, the State's Attorney is an independent constitutional officer who has responsibility for prosecuting crimes that occur within her jurisdiction. Vt. Const., H. II, § 50; 24 V.S.A. § 361. As such, respect for the rule of law and due process requires certain deference to the State's Attorney's work. This deference is crucial to maintaining public trust in our democratic systems and institutions.

That said, I share your concerns about public safety. I believe that public safety is the first responsibility of government. In the matters at hand, I trust that the Departments of Public Safety and Mental Health will carry out their duties consistent with their statutory authority. My office will also do its part.

As you know, the Attorney General's Office has concurrent authority with the State's Attorneys to represent the State in all criminal matters. 3 V.S.A. § 152. In consideration of the above, my office will conduct a thorough, independent review of the dismissed cases and determine whether new charges should be filed. However, as I state every time criminal charges are filed, every defendant is presumed innocent until their guilt is proven in a court of law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "TJD", with a large, stylized flourish extending from the bottom right.

Thomas J. Donovan, Jr.  
Attorney General